Name _____

PRIMARY SOURCE

John L. O'Sullivan edited a magazine and a newspaper in New York. In the summer of 1845, writing about Texas, he used the words "manifest destiny." In December 1845, when the United States and Britain both claimed the Oregon Country, he used them again. A few days later Robert Winthrop, a congressman from Massachusetts who wanted to settle Oregon peacefully, answered the idea in Congress.

Manifest Destiny: Who Has the Right?

Their words (exact)	In plain English
O'Sullivan, "Annexation" (July–August 1845)	
... for the avowed object of thwarting our policy and hampering our power, limiting our greatness and checking the fulfilment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions.	Other nations (Britain and France) openly tried to block our plans, hold back our power and greatness, and stop us from doing what we are clearly meant to do: spread across the continent that God gave us, so our fast-growing population can grow freely.
O'Sullivan, "Annexation" (July–August 1845)	
If Texas became peopled with an American population, it was by no contrivance of our government, but on the express invitation of that of Mexico herself ...	If Americans came to live in Texas, our government did not plot it. Mexico's own government invited them.
O'Sullivan, "The True Title" (December 27, 1845)	
[The American claim] is by the right of our manifest destiny to overspread and to possess the whole of the continent which Providence has given us for the development of the great experiment of liberty and federative self government entrusted to us.	Our claim to Oregon is the right of our clear destiny to spread over and own the whole continent, which God gave us so we could carry on our great test of freedom and of states governing themselves together.
Winthrop, speech in Congress (January 3, 1846)	
The right of our manifest destiny! There is a right for a new chapter in the law of nations; or rather, for the special laws of our own country; for I suppose the right of a manifest destiny to spread, will not be admitted to exist in any nation except the universal Yankee nation!	"The right of our manifest destiny"! That would need a new chapter in the rules between nations, or rather, a special rule just for us, because I suppose no country except the United States will agree that such a right exists.

John L. O'Sullivan, "Annexation" (unsigned; credited to O'Sullivan), The United States Magazine and Democratic Review, vol. 17 (July-August 1845), pp. 5-6, checked against the scan of the original issue (https://archive.org/details/sim_united-states-democratic-review_july-august-1845_17_85). John L. O'Sullivan, "The True Title," New York Morning News, December 27, 1845, as quoted in Frederick Merk, Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History (New York: Knopf, 1963), pp. 31-32 (https://archive.org/details/manifestdestinym00merk_0); the words in brackets are Merk's. Robert C. Winthrop, speech in the House of Representatives, January 3, 1846, The Congressional Globe, January 6, 1846 (vol. 15, no. 9), checked against the scan (https://archive.org/details/sim_united-states-congress-congressional-globe_1846-01-06_15_9). Public domain. Exact words; ... marks words left out.